

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00  
NSC-05 OMB-01 EB-08 AID-05 COME-00 MCE-00 DODE-00  
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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1934  
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USCINCEUR  
CINCUSNAVEUR  
CINCUSAFE  
CINCUSAREUR  
USNMR SHAPE  
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CINCUSAFE FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, MARR, NATO, US, GR

SUBJECT: AVEROFF SPEAKS OUT ON NATO AND COUP PLOTTERS

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED: DEFENSE MINISTER AVEROFF SPOKE OUT STRONGLY YESTERDAY IN SUPPORT OF GREEK MEMBERSHIP IN THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE. HE ALSO WARNED POSSIBLE COUP PLOTTERS THAT THEY COULD DESTROY THEMSELVES AND HARM THE PRESTIGE OF THE ARMED FORCES SHOULD THEY EMBARK ON ANY ADVENTURES, WHICH, IN ANY CASE, WERE CONDEMNED TO FAILURE. AVEROFF SPOKE TO A GROUP OF "NATIONAL GUARD" AND "GENDARMERIE" OFFICERS ON ONE OF THE DODECANNESSE ISLANDS AT THE BEGINNING OF A 15-DAY TOUR OF THE AEGEAN ISLANDS.

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AVEROFF IS ACCOMPANIED ON HIS TOUR BY GENERAL GRATSIOS, CHIEF OF THE HELLENIC ARMY, AND GENERAL VORIAS, CHIEF OF THE SUPREME MILITARY COMMAND OF THE INTERIOR AND THE ISLANDS.

2. AVEROFF BEGAN HIS REMARKS STATING THE PRESENT WAS A DIFFICULT PERIOD FOR GREECE. ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS' DEATH HAD

INTENSIFIED THE DIFFICULTIES, HE ADDED, AND, AFTER SOME REMARKS IN TRIBUTE TO MAKARIOS, CALLED FOR THE UNITY OF THE CYPRIOT PEOPLE. TURNING TO THE SUBJECT OF NATO, THE MINISTER EXPRESSED HOPE THAT GREECE'S SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ALLIANCE WOULD TAKE CONCRETE FORM. "OUR TRADITION, IDEOLOGY, INTELLECTUAL STRUCTURE AND THE NEEDS OF OUR ARMED FORCES PLACE US WITHIN THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE; EVERYTHING ELSE IS CHEAP DEMAGOGY," HE SAID. "THE SAD PART OF IT ALL IS THAT WE ARE FACING A SERIES OF PROVOCATIONS FROM ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE ALLIANCE." DESPITE GREECE'S DESIRE FOR GOOD RELATIONS, AVEROFF CONTINUED, THERE HAS NOT BEEN AN APPROPRIATE RESPONSE FROM THE OTHER SIDE. INSTEAD, HE LAMENTED, "A SCHEMING ALLY WITHIN THE ALLIANCE" WAS ACTING AGAINST GREECE IN SPITE OF THE EFFORTS OF THE CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT TO NEGOTIATE A SETTLEMENT OF THEIR DIFFERENCES. NEVERTHELESS, AVEROFF MAINTAINED, GREECE MUST BELONG TO NATO NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF THE THREAT ARISING FROM EAST-WEST COMPETITION, BUT BECAUSE OF THE BASIC QUESTION OF GREECE'S REQUIREMENTS FOR "MILITARY SUPPLIES."

3. AVEROFF WENT ON TO EXPLAIN THAT WHILE GREECE HAS MADE GOOD PROGRESS IN ADVANCING DOMESTIC ARMS PRODUCTION -- I.E., ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AIRCRAFT (MAINTENANCE AND OVERHAUL) INDUSTRY, A LIGHT ARMS FACTORY AND CONSTRUCTION OF NAVAL AUXILIARY SHIPS -- THE COUNTRY CANNOT ESTABLISH AN ARMS INDUSTRY WHICH WOULD BE ADEQUATE FOR THE NATION'S FULL DEFENSE NEEDS. "WE THEREFORE HAVE TO TURN TO FOREIGN MARKETS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ESPECIALLY THE U.S. ON WHICH WE DEPEND FOR MOST OF OUR SPARE PARTS. FURTHERMORE, WE PURCHASE NEW EQUIPMENT FROM THE SAME MARKET, PART OF IT FREE AND PART THROUGH CREDITS, WHICH WE CANNOT OBTAIN FROM ANY OTHER COUNTRY." HE THEN PLEDGED THAT "IF NECESSARY, GREECE CAN DEFEND ITSELF."

4. IN CONCLUSION, MINISTER AVEROFF WARNED "THE FEW FOOLS OUTSIDE THE ARMED FORCES TO BE CAREFUL" NOT TO ENGAGE IN ANY ILLEGAL ACTIVITY. THEY HAD ABSOLUTELY NO CHANCE OF SUCCEEDING, HE ADDED. BUT, ANY ABORTIVE ATTEMPT, "NO MATTER HOW SMALL," HE CONTENDED, COULD DESTROY THE PERPETRATORS; BUT IT WOULD ALSO, AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, DAMAGE THE PRESTIGE OF THE ARMY AND MIGHT LEAD TO THE DISMISSAL FROM ACTIVE SERVICE "OF HUNDREDS AND POSSIBLY THOUSANDS" OF OFFICERS NOW DEVOTED TO THEIR PROFESSIONAL DUTIES WHO WOULD COME UNDER SUSPICION OR SUFFER FROM THE ANTI-PATHIES THAT WOULD BE REVIVED. END UNCLASSIFIED

5. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE: COMMENT: AVEROFF'S REMARKS WERE GIVEN PROMINENT COVERAGE IN THE MEDIA. IN PUBLICIZING THE TRIP THE GOG UNDOUBTEDLY SEEKS TO DEMONSTRATE ITS CONTINUING CONCERN OVER THE DEFENSE OF THE AEGEAN ISLANDS. AT THE SAME TIME, AVEROFF WAS ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE TO PUBLIC OPINION THE

CLEAR LINKAGE BETWEEN THE DEFENSE OF GREECE AND THE NEED FOR  
A NATO CONNECTION, AND SPECIFICALLY FOR A CLOSE US-GREEK DEFENSE  
ARRANGEMENT AS PROVIDED IN THE RECENTLY INITIALLED DCA.  
HIS REMARKS CONCERNING POTENTIAL PLOTTERS IN A REPEAT OF SIMILAR  
WARNINGS IN THE PAST. AVEROFF'S WORD OF CAUTION WAS NO DOUBT  
PROMPTED THIS TIME, AT LEAST IN PART, BY THE ESCAPE FROM PRISON  
EARLIER IN THE WEEK OF JUNTA ACTIVIST PARASKEVAS BOLARIS (IN  
PRISON FOR HIS INVOLVEMENT IN THE ABORTIVE FEBRUARY 1975 COUP)  
AND SPECULATION ACCOMPANYING IT CONCERNING POSSIBLE ACTIONS BY  
JUNTA SYMPATHIZERS AGAINST THE CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT. END  
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